

# Kentucky's Adolescent Literacy Work Plan

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The Kentucky Board of Education is a statewide leader in focusing the efforts of adolescent literacy development in the Kentucky Department of Education, local school districts and partners in public education. The KBE is committed to all children reaching proficiency in reading and writing and to all children performing at high levels through quality teaching and administration and a strong and supportive environment.

## Teacher Preparation/Certification

A major finding of the NASBE study group responsible for the report, *Reading at Risk: The State Response to the Crisis in Adolescent Literacy*, is that a key way to target improvement in literacy skills is to teach them within the context of core academic subjects, rather than apart from challenging content instruction. In order to achieve this goal effectively, teacher preparation and training must be revised to include standards addressing reading and content literacy instruction so that students have access to the best prepared practitioners. This would include specific coursework in literacy for pre-service teachers in all content areas, as well as professional development opportunities in literacy for practicing teachers.

Schools and teachers will also require help in diagnosing students' reading deficiencies, implementing appropriate interventions, and assessing and monitoring progress toward goals. Additionally, the state needs to encourage more teachers to become certified reading specialists to meet the needs of our most struggling students. In Kentucky, a teacher must have a K-12 Reading/Writing Endorsement in order to teach a reading intervention class at the secondary level. Currently, there are 682 teachers with credentials in this area, but only 110 are currently teaching at the middle or high school level. There are 617 Reading courses reported, according to the Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB), but this does not inform us of what specific courses they may be teaching that count as reading intervention classes.

Additionally, schools and teachers will need resources and staff to support implementation of literacy plans and strategies. Recent work to revise principal preparation, redesign master's program, establish teacher leadership networks, and restructure secondary are among those initiatives that relate to fulfilling the resources and staffing needs required to meet our goals.

### **Task Force Recommendations:**

1. Increase competency of pre-service teachers in reading theory and practice across all content areas, grades 4-12.
2. Increase competency of pre-service teachers across all content areas in literacy strategies, grades 4-12.
3. Provide endorsements and certifications for literacy coaching and literacy leadership.
4. Provide incentives to increase the number of certified Reading Specialists and provide emergency certifications while teachers are earning

certifications.

5. Model research-based literacy strategies within post-secondary classrooms.

**Goal: 1. Increase competency in reading theory and practice of all pre-service teachers who are seeking certification for grades 4-12.**

Objective	Strategy/Activity	Timeline	Agency Partners Person Responsible
1.1 Incorporate reading theory and practice into pre-service course requirements for all teacher candidates, grades 4-12	1.1a Identify and report to the EPSB Board and KBE the number of undergraduate programs requiring reading theory and practice course(s) and/or embedded content within degree programs for teachers, grades 4-12. 1.1b Develop a plan to address those programs not identified in 1.1a 1.1c Initiate plan to increase the number of degree programs requiring reading theory and practice courses and/or embedded content	1.1a December 2008 1.1b Spring 2009 1.1c Fall 2010	EPSB CPE Institutions of higher education
1.2 Incorporate literacy strategies instruction into pre-service course requirements for all secondary teacher candidates	1.2a Partner higher education literacy faculty with arts and science educators to engage in professional growth/study focused on research-based literacy strategies 1.2b Create an on-line network via Blackboard to share literacy strategy resources and provide professional follow-up support for strategy 1.2a 1.2c Offer courses/modules on adolescent literacy available through KY virtual schools	1.2a Summer 2009 1.2b Fall 2009 1.2c Fall 2008	CCLD Institutions of higher education CCLD and KDE

**Goal: 2. Increase opportunities for teachers to receive endorsements and certifications for literacy coaching and literacy leadership.**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy/Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Agency Partners Person Responsible</b>
2.1 Design programs for literacy coaching and literacy leadership endorsements and certification	2.1a Partner with institutions of higher education and EPSB to create teacher leadership certification programs that allow for a focus on literacy coaching and literacy leadership	Spring 2009	Institutions of higher education EPSB KDE
2.2 Communicate endorsement and certification opportunities to literacy teachers	2.2a Publish endorsements and certification programs through websites, share through teacher networks	Fall 2009	KDE CCLD EPSB
2.3 Provide tuition/loan forgiveness for teachers who obtain reading specialist certification and work for four years in a KY public school with adolescent learners	2.3a Advertise through public service announcements (television, radio), listservs and the KDE website opportunities for tuition/loan forgiveness.		
2.4 Allow emergency certification for secondary teachers who are enrolled in reading specialist programs	2.4b Require evidence of coursework related to reading specialist program requirements	Fall 2009	EPSB
2.5 Develop reading specialist programs to be delivered through regional cadre sessions	2.5a		Institutions of Higher Ed. CCLD

### Professional Development

In addition to teacher preparation and certification, practicing teachers need on-going, job-embedded professional development in order to implement literacy instruction across the content areas. According to the Alliance for Excellent Education report, *Literacy Instruction in the Content Areas*, “Inasmuch as the academic content areas comprise the heart of the secondary school curriculum, content literacy instruction must be a cornerstone of any movement to build the high-quality secondary schools that young people deserve and on which the nation’s social and economic health will depend.” The report goes on to say that “reading and writing are more than just basic skills that permit students to go on and study advanced subject matter; reading and writing are also the very stuff from which the academic content areas are made.” Professional development supported by school leadership is a key way to increase teacher competency in this area.

#### **Task Force Recommendations:**

6. Provide professional development in literacy and learning strategies.
7. Provide professional development in literacy strategies to enhance content learning.
8. Provide professional development in literacy team planning and implementation.
9. Provide professional development to literacy coaches, grades 4-12, and incentives to schools to provide coaches.
10. Train state coaches in order to provide support to schools on a regional basis.
11. Develop and provide online professional development and courses in literacy.

### **Goal 3: Increase teacher competency in literacy practices to enhance content learning.**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy/Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Agency Partners Person Responsible</b>
3.1 Ensure a cohesive approach to content literacy training	3.1a Collaborate with KDE network liaisons to share literacy strategies and resources with content networks 3.1b Incorporate literacy strategies into teacher networks 3.1c Model units and lessons that incorporate content literacy strategies and 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Skills	3.1a Fall 2008 3.1b Spring 2009 3.1c Ongoing	KDE

3.2 Establish a KY literacy coaching network with literacy specialists serving as regional state coaches	3.2a Organize a literacy coaching strand at KTLC 2009	Fall 2008	KDE
3.3 Develop courses/modules on adolescent literacy available through KY virtual schools	3.3a Partner with higher education to develop and offer graduate credit	Spring 2009	KDE CPE Institutions of higher education KET

#### Goal 4: Train and support schools/districts in literacy planning and implementation.

Objective	Strategy/Activity	Timeline	Agency Partners Person Responsible
4.1 Collaborate with partner schools and districts to provide professional development in literacy team planning and implementation	4.1a Publish Literacy PERKS to guide teams in decision making 4.1b Identify partners from ALCP, KCLC and KCLI 4.1c Provide training and follow-up for all partner schools and districts 4.1d Communicate literacy plan requirement to administration organizations (e.g., KLA, KASA)	4.1a Fall 2008 4.1b Fall 2008 4.1c Spring 2009 4.1d Spring 2009	KDE

### Instructional Resources

As pre-service and practicing teachers gain skill in integrating literacy into the content areas, they will need resources to develop capacity in the schools in order to support implementation. And while it is useful for teachers and students to know and use a set of general literacy strategies, it is not enough in order for students to navigate the difficult content-specific texts they encounter in the various subjects. According to Alvermann and Moore and other literacy researchers, not all literacy skills can be transferred easily from one field to another. Resources are a key way in which implementation can be supported.

#### **Task Force Recommendations:**

12. Provide literacy resources (e.g., instructional CDs/DVDs, print materials) to schools.
13. Extend time for literacy by embedding literacy strategies in all academic areas and through cross-discipline units of study.
14. Target literacy instruction for struggling readers through access to teachers who are highly trained in literacy instruction, assessments and interventions.
15. Utilize reading clinics associated with institutions of higher education.
16. Encourage schools to provide students with access to a wide variety of reading materials.

#### **Goal 5: Increase student and teacher access to literacy resources.**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy/Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Agency Partners Person Responsible</b>
5.1 Publish current literacy resource CDs and DVDs through the KYVS	5.1a Work with Virtual/Secondary staff to format, store and post resources in KYVS	Fall 2008	KDE
5.2 Create a resource section on the KDE literacy website to link adolescent literacy resources	5.2a Reorganize Literacy section of KDE website and update resources on adolescent literacy	Fall 2008	KDE
5.3 Support highly trained literacy teachers as they facilitate KVS courses for struggling readers	5.3a Provide training as KVS course facilitators	Fall 2009	KDE
5.4 Increase the number of reading specialists serving at the secondary level	5.4a Identify critical policy supports at institutional and state level for	5.4a Ongoing 5.4b Spring 2009	Institutions of Higher Education, EPSB, KDE

	successful scale up.  5.4b Build buy-in “ground up” from a small number of pilot sites.		
5.5 Collaborate with library media specialists, KRA, and other literacy organizations to provide information on wide reading	5.5a Provide access/information on wide reading through the KDE literacy resource website 5.7b Offer mini-grants to schools for purchasing adolescent reading materials	5.5a Spring 2009 5.7b Fall 2008	KDE KRA

### **Data Informed Decision Making**

Assessments, including diagnostic, formative and summative, are essential in informing instruction to meet students' individual needs. Adjustments to instruction based on data ensure that student learning is on track to meet learning goals. Kentucky is well posed to meet many of these needs through Individualized Learning Plans, a data system to track student performance, and intervention requirements to meet college readiness standards, but schools will need information and support in designing informal and formal assessments to diagnose and monitor students. Kentucky can also use data from initiatives such as Striving Readers and the Adolescent Literacy Coaching Project to inform decisions.

#### **Task Force Recommendations:**

17. Use diagnostic and formative assessments, including determining students' reading levels in content areas, to inform instruction.
18. Use data (including Explore, PLAN and ACT) to determine interventions needed for students, including those not meeting college readiness standards.
19. Use Individualized Learning Plans (grades 6-12) to differentiate instruction and meet individual learning needs and goals.

### **Goal 6: Use multiple sources of data to determine and monitor student literacy needs.**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy/Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Agency Partners Person Responsible</b>
6.1 Clarify the process and value of formative assessment among KY educators	6.1a Establish a common understanding of formative assessment strategies among KDE-based staff and field staff 6.1b Provide formative assessment training and support resources through KVS	6.1a Fall 2008  6.1b Fall 2009	KDE Measured Progress
6.2 Provide information and resources regarding universal screening and progress monitoring	6.2a Identify universal screening tools and progress monitoring processes. 6.2.b Build data infrastructure across secondary schools	6.2 a Fall 2008 6.2b Ongoing	KDE
6.3 Inform schools and districts of alignment between college	6.3a Publish combined CRS/POS document on KDE website and include	Fall 2008 – ongoing	KDE



readiness standards and KY Program of Studies	information in network newsletters, email from the Commissioner and other avenues		
6.4 Develop interventions component of ILP	6.4a Identify successful techniques for effectively layering in interventions overtime and integrating family and afterschool interventions around important goals such as increased vocabulary development.	Spring 2009	KDE

## Support Structure

### **Task Force Recommendations:**

20. Require schools to develop literacy plans.
21. Utilize literacy and learning strategies as a component of Kentucky Teacher Internship Program (KTIP) observation protocols and experienced teacher standards.
22. Encourage involvement by administrators in team planning, implementation and monitoring of literacy plans.
23. Provide state level literacy coaches to work with schools and literacy coaches to improve literacy instruction.
24. Establish a literacy office that is responsible for organizing existing resources to form a cohesive support system for schools and districts, preschool through postsecondary.
25. Develop programs for parents and community members to become effective partners for literacy advancement.

### **Goal 7: Establish a systemic approach to meeting the literacy needs of districts, schools and students.**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy/Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Agency Partners Person Responsible</b>
7.1 Publish Literacy PERKS to guide teams in literacy planning	7.1a Post Literacy PERKS revision on KDE literacy website and disseminate information about it to schools/districts through networks	Summer 2008	KDE
7.2 Increase current knowledge base of adolescent literacy among school and district administrators	7.2a Inform and train leadership groups on the use of Literacy PERKS 7.2b Provide literacy resources to administrators through principal certification programs, HSEs/DAGCs, and KDE web resources	7.2a Spring 2009 7.2b Spring 2009	KDE
7.3 Incorporate a leadership component in all KDE literacy grants and literacy grants through partner organizations	7.3a Revise grant templates to include a leadership component and include a requirement in all RFAs/RFPs	Ongoing	KDE
7.4 Position literacy specialists as state level literacy coaches	7.4a Work with the literacy specialists in their monthly planning meetings on adolescent literacy	Fall 2008	KDE
7.5 Reorganize KDE's language	7.5a Work collaboratively among the	July 2008	KDE

arts branch to accommodate a literacy approach	writing and reading staff to address literacy concerns		
7.6 Collaborate with Family Resource/ Youth Service Centers and other agencies to provide parent workshops, information and resources	7.6a Disseminate literacy resources to FRYSCs consultants and staff across the state	Fall 2009	KDE
7.7 Include literacy tips for parents in the ParentINFO newsletters	7.7a Work with newsletter staff to include a monthly feature on literacy and 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Skills	Fall 2008	KDE

## Communication

### Goal 8: Implement a communication plan for Kentucky's adolescent literacy work.

Objective	Strategy/Activity	Timeline	Agency Partners Person Responsible
8.1 Collaborate across agencies to report status of adolescent literacy work	8.1a Establish a lead contact from each partner organization who will work with each organization and report to the KBE 8.1b Submit semi-annual reports to KBE documenting the implementation of the KY Adolescent Literacy Work Plan	8.1a Ongoing 8.1b quarterly beginning Winter 2008	All partners
8.2 Collaborate across agencies to produce an annual, data-based report on the state of adolescent literacy in KY.	8.2a Coordinate efforts across agencies to review adolescent literacy data, drop-out statistics, remediation, etc., on a regular basis	Ongoing	KBE KDE

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